

REMARKS

Claims 7, 9, and 23-38 were previously pending, of which claims 26 and 29 have been canceled; therefore, claims 7, 9, 23-25, 27, 28, and 30-38 are currently pending. Claims 7, 9, and 27 have been amended. Claims 33-38 have been allowed. Reconsideration of the pending claims is respectfully requested in light of the foregoing amendments and following remarks.

Claim Objections

Claim 9 stands objected to as being dependent on a canceled claim. In response, Applicants have amended claim 9 to depend from claim 7, rather than canceled claim 8.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 26 and 29 stand objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but the Examiner has indicated that the claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the respective base claim and any intervening claims. In response, Applicants have rewritten independent claim 7 to include all of the limitations of claim 26, which has been canceled, and have rewritten independent claim 27 to include all of the limitations of claim 29, which has been canceled, thereby placing claims 7 and 27 in condition for allowance. Claims 9 and 23-25 depend from and further limit claim 7 and are therefore also deemed to be in condition for allowance. Claims 28 and 30-32 depend from and further limit claim 27 and are therefore also deemed to be in condition for allowance.

Claims 33-38 have been allowed.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 7, 9, 25, 27, 28, and 32 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,900,135 to Somekh et al. (hereinafter "Somekh") in view of JP63244748 and in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,355,516 to Kim et al. (hereinafter "Kim") and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,926,738 to Cronin (hereinafter "Cronin").

In response, as indicated above, Applicants have rewritten independent claim 7 to include all of the limitations of claim 26, which has been canceled, and have rewritten independent claim 27 to include all of the limitations of claim 29, which has been canceled, thereby placing claims 7 and 27 in condition for allowance. Claims 9 and 23-25 depend from and further limit claim 7 and are therefore also deemed to be in condition for allowance. Claims 28 and 30-32 depend from and further limit claim 27 and are therefore also deemed to be in condition for allowance.

EXPEDITED PROCEDURE - GROUP ART UNIT 2818
RESPONSE UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.116
US Patent Application No. 10/822,960
Reply to Final Office Action of October 16, 2006


Attorney Docket No. 2003-1398 / 24061.187
Customer No. 42717

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is apparent that all of the pending claims (claims 7, 9, 23-25, 27, 28, and 30-38) are now in condition for allowance. A formal notice of allowance of all pending claims is therefore respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number if a telephone conference would expedite or aid the prosecution and examination of this application.

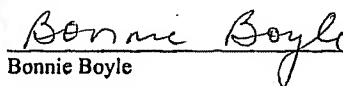
Respectfully submitted,


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Dated: 11/15/06

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D-1451865_1.DOC

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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being filed with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office via EFS-Web on <u>11-15</u> , 2006.
 Bonnie Boyle